11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

joke with your brother's, it means you are in earnest." The only Blood confined to the insane asylum, whose case was not complicated by physical causes, attempted to murder his wife because he believed she was having intercourse with a ghost. Many a husband, approaching his end, threatens his mate with death, for only when she accompanies him on his final journey can he be sure that in the next world he alone will possess her.

Husbands, who need proof of good behavior and who can afford to pay for it, may insist that their wives "vow the tongues"[180] or put up the Sun Lodge, for only those who are chaste before and faithful after marriage can do so with impunity. Sometimes, however, the pressure may be so great, that a woman must take a chance. Urged by her husband who remained unconvinced concerning her virginity at marriage, Weasel Girl distributed the tongues at the Sun Dance. Her husband's uncle, noting that she failed to mention the names of any men she had rebuffed, suspected her avowal, and threw his piece of meat to a dog at his side. Later that evening, this dog was shot while making off with a chicken. His alertness and caution had saved him, the uncle was certain, from a sure and untimely death. That Weasel Girl, herself, only lived three years longer was further evidence that she had lied.

Suspicion is not always without cause, as it may well have been in this instance. The most casual encounter, the social dances in the dance hall, even the Sun Dance, offer innumerable opportunities for illicit adventures, and these are not missed. Many a husband has found his wife with her lover. But so obsessed are they by their suspicions, that every possibility of adultery immediately becomes a fact.

Informal wife-lending among the Blood is inconceivable whether to a casual friend[181] or a life-long "*taka*." Yet this act which cannot be tolerated in daily living, is ritually sanctioned when the sorcery roots are purchased by members in the Horn Society.[182] At this time, the wife of the buyer deposits her clothes in her husband's lap. Protected by a buffalo robe, she is taken to the tipi of the seller and ceremonially painted. She then "goes

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[180] Wissler, *Blackfoot Sun Dance*, p. 234 ff.

[181] Henry in his Journal (vol. 2, p. 526) states that the Blackfoot were a "nuisance in offering women." Wissler (*Social Life*, p. 10) observes that he believes these women were captives.

[182] Among the neighboring Cree the opposite situation existed. They practised informal wife exchange. D. G. Mandelbaum (*The Plains Cree*, p. 246) writes: "This relationship reflected considerable honor upon the participants, for only the most stout-hearted men could become intimate companions of their wives' paramours." But in a ceremony called Sitting Up Until Morning (*ibid.*, p. 228) although the "warriors of one society issued invitations to the wives or daughters of the members of other societies" and "at dawn, the men washed and painted the women's faces,

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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on the sacred walk."[133] Returning, she gives the sinister root which she has received from her nocturnal partner to her uneasy husband.

The interval of waiting is among the greatest trials of the Blood. The anxious husband must show no jealousy during the "walk"; he must joke with his fellow members and suffer their teasing without taking offense. So great is this strain that some are unable to bring themselves to the test; others hire a substitute wife, although the added cost may be considerable.

The Blood are not overly engrossed with sorcery, perhaps because black magic may act as a boomerang, perhaps because hostility is quickly and overtly expressed, perhaps because their way of life brought numerous and tangible rewards. But some standard of values is suggested by the fact that the greatest power to hurt others is acquired by submitting to what they believe entails the greatest personal suffering—the possession of one's wife by another. Its institutionalization in the Horn Society in no way relaxes the sexual tensions among the people at large; it merely succeeds in heightening them for the few who want to purchase the most feared power available to the Blood.

Writing on the relations between Blackfoot men and women, Wissler observes, "We found no traces of the conventional modes of registering conquests as among the young men of the Dakota and Village Indians."[134] Victims of a monotonous poverty, these more easterly tribesmen readily transferred a symbol from their glamorous past to the one remaining area of competition, sex. The counting of coups over amorous successes may well have seemed unnecessary, and even ridiculous, to the more exuberant Blood whose daily routines gave them many other ego satisfactions.

MARITAL INSTABILITY.—Psychopathic possessiveness and aggressive behavior, however, offer a poor foundation for a satisfactory or enduring marriage. In 1909, a worried agent, after discussing the difficulties arising from drink, observed, "The morality question is at present a more serious one on this reservation, the transgressors very principally young married people who, after quarrelling separate and insist upon availing themselves of the old tribal right to take other partners."[135] The instability of early marriage can be easily documented. A Dancing Bird, beautiful if undiscriminating, consoled ten "husbands"; a wilful Mary Red Bear boasted

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combed their hair, and gave them a gift. . .no sexual license is permitted during this occasion."

The attitudes and values of the two tribes are nicely revealed in the following incident from a tale: A Blackfoot visiting a Cree makes him a present of a horse. In return, the Cree offers him his wife.

[133] Cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, p. 413 ff. Also Harry D. Biele, Field Notes.

[134] Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 9.

[135] 1909, Vol. 43, No. 15, p. 169.

824 [825] been able to review this with him. He said that the cutting of small trees was sanctified with fire originating from a sweet grass lighter.

TOBACCO

Nicotiana multivalvis

276 796 182 Smoking was an important part of Blackfoot ritual: like the communal meal, it tended to emphasize the inclusiveness of those partaking.

575 249 796 Traditionally, the native tobacco (Nicotiana multivalvis) was ceremonially planted and harvested by members of a North Blackfoot society known as the Tobacco society (Fig. 4). (It is noteworthy that this society was not a [184] [561] part of the age-graded system and that it was maintained only by the North Blackfoot.) For about a week, each spring, members gathered at the sacred planting-grounds. Elaborate ceremonies accompanied the sowing. The tobacco [237] [415] seed, with fertilizer, had been stored through the winter in pericardium containers of the society's Tobacco bundles. (The same bundle, less certain paraphernalia, was alternately called the Beaver bundle.)

249 [782] [784] [786] [776] Between the period of planting and harvesting, taboos prevented anyone from visiting the plots, because the young plants were being tended by supernatural Small People, who did their gardening in return for offerings of miniature apparel, which had been left at the close of the planting ceremony (Fig. 5).

824 778 276 [249] At harvest, in the fall, the seed was used to replenish the bundle supplies, and the leaves were distributed to the appropriate claimants, who in turn later distributed leaves to the other divisions of the tribe. The tobacco usually was mixed with the leaves of kinnikinnik (Arctos-taphylos uva-ursi) or the dried cambium or red-osier dogwood (Cornus stolonifera). The mixtures were included with all religious bundles---either in the bundle proper or in a preliminary bundle.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 17]

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

721 The brief ceremony ending, we were all happy again, alert, nerved up to meet whatever danger might be in store for us.

As we were about to try to get more sleep, came Heavy Runner hurrying in to us from the rim of the plain and exclaiming: "Riders to the south of us! Many riders running a herd of buffalo on the plain to the east of the river. So not far below there must be the Cutthroats' camp!"

Exciting news. We all wanted to see the enemy hunters, so, sheltered by the timber and then the tall sagebrush, we moved into a patch of cherry trees on the edge of the plain, and from there had a good view of them. All of forty men, some three miles off, down from their horses butchering their kill. And then came many women riding in to help them with their work. Proof enough that the Cutthroats' camp could not be far below us.

Said Many-Tail-Feathers: "Tonight, the Above Ones helping us, we kill that worst of them, White Dog, and get off with some of their horses. So now, all of you, lie down, sleep, so that you may be strong for what you have to do. I will, myself, keep watch upon the Cutthroats, and later on, call upon one of you to take my place."

We found it impossible, there so near our enemies, really to sleep. We dozed at times, often sat up to look at them, and at last, in mid-afternoon, saw them string back down the valley, their horses loaded with meat and hides.

Then Many-Tail-Feathers said: "Remember this, all of you. Our one and hard undertaking is to kill our worst enemy, White Dog."

After that, none spoke for a long time. Serious were our thoughts. We were this coming night to enter the enemy camp, and with what results? Well we knew the danger of it. I knew that each of my [782] companions was praying as I was. I touched my sacred helper in the [786] little bag at my breast and whispered: "Hear me, Sacred Helper. Help me. Give me to survive this night."

Said Many-Tail-Feathers then: "Take care. Let us go."

The sun was still an hour or so from setting. Many-Tail-Feathers leading, we started on, keeping just within the edge of a long grove bordering the river. It ended well above a sharp bend of the valley, so we were obliged to keep on in the open until we could reach the